



MEDIA RELEASE

SBA SOUTH CAROLINA DISTRICT OFFICE

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Midlands Firm Is 2008 SBA Small Business Exporter of the Year

GILBERT, S.C. – Cecilia M. Shepherd, president of Compass International Company, Inc. in Gilbert, is the 2008 Small Business Administration (SBA) Small Business Exporter of the Year for South Carolina. Shepherd was nominated by Daniel Holt, International Finance Specialist with the SBA Office of International Finance.

In a time of increased concern about outsourcing, Shepherd – a native of Argentina – and her firm are helping to “in-source” global capital to home-grown U.S. companies.

Shepherd founded Compass International Company, Inc., an export management company, in June 2002. Compass provides American manufacturers in niche industries – such as foodservice equipment and equine health – with a full-service alternative to an in-house export department. After conducting research to determine the potential marketability of a company’s product within a given country, Compass assumes the foreign credit risk and the fixed costs associated with export, including international travel.

Since 2003, Compass has experienced triple digit growth.

“If you ‘Googled’ the word entrepreneur, there is a good chance you would get the name Cecilia Shepherd as one of the top choices. You would also get an offer to sell from her,” said Holt.

Worldwide demand for high quality American-made goods is high, and Compass sells its clients’ products to countries like India, England, Japan, the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates.

Shepherd received exporting assistance from the SBA Office of International Finance and from the U.S. Department of Commerce. She also received two SBA-guaranteed loans, including a line of credit for exporting and an SBA Express loan to fuel Compass International’s growth.

Cecilia Shepherd will be honored at the SBA South Carolina District Office’s small business awards ceremony, part of the Salute to Small Business on Tuesday, April 1, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

All SBA programs and services are provided on a non-discriminatory basis.

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